

Prisoners in Kuwait City visited

GENEVA (AP) — Delegates of the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) have begun visiting detainees in Kuwait City following reports of serious human rights abuses by security forces and freelance gangs. A statement issued at the Geneva headquarters of the all-Swiss agency Sunday said the visits began Saturday at the city's military prison under an agreement reached with the Kuwaiti government. It said that in line with standard ICRC procedures, detainees will be interviewed without witness. "After the visits, a confidential report will be given to the authorities, requesting, where necessary, improvements in the detainees' treatment and conditions," it added. Middle East Watch, a New York-based human rights group, reported last week that Kuwaiti security forces and freelance gangs used lit cigarettes, knives and other instruments to torture hundreds of people suspected of collaborating with Iraqi troops after the invasion of Kuwait. Many of the detainees are reported to be Palestinians.

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Fahd orders end to anti-Arab propaganda

RIYADH (AP) — King Fahd Sunday ordered Saudi Arabian news media to avoid criticising other Arabs. Information Minister Ali Al Shaer announced in a statement to the Saudi Press Agency, Mr. Shaer said the king's decision was inspired by the current holy month of Ramadan. "All (negative) responses in the media — press, radio and television — to what is published by the Arab media in general will be ceased as of Monday, the 9th of Ramadan," said the statement. "We hope that all other Arab and Islamic media will chart the same blessed Islamic course."

4 die, 7 missing in Egyptian floods

CAIRO (AP) — Four people died and seven are missing in the Sinai Peninsula because of flash floods from two days of heavy rain, a state-run newspaper said Sunday. The Al Messa newspaper quoted Major Mohammad Khodr, chief of security in the province of North Sinai, as saying that three bedouin shepherds were killed in the storm in addition to one motorist whose car overturned. Maj. Khodr said policemen are still searching for five missing bedouin children and the drivers of two cars which were found buried in the mud.

Israel says 3 guerrillas killed

TEL AVIV (AP) — Israeli soldiers shot and killed three heavily-armed guerrillas in Lebanon Sunday about a kilometre north of the border, the military command said. It said the troops encountered the three while on "operational duty," Sunday afternoon in the southwestern corner of the so-called "security zone" in Lebanon. The soldiers "opened fire and in the exchange of fire, the three guerrillas were killed," the command statement added.

Former Iraqi envoy heads for S. Arabia

MADRID (R) — The former Iraqi ambassador to Spain, who sought political asylum after the Gulf war, left Madrid for Riyadh Sunday aboard a Saudi Arabian airliner. Foreign Ministry spokesman Juan Lenz told reporters Arshad Tawfiq Ismail, who asked for asylum two weeks ago, left "voluntarily and at his own request." Earlier Spanish state radio, quoting Foreign Ministry sources, said Mr. Tawfiq intended to contact Iraqi opposition groups.

Israel questions appointment of special U.N. envoy

TEL AVIV — U.N. Secretary General Javier Perez de Cuellar has appointed Edouard Brunner of Switzerland to replace Gunnar Jarring as Special Representative to the Middle East. Mr. Brunner, 58, is Switzerland's ambassador to Washington, and former deputy foreign minister. The post was established in 1967 by U.N. Resolution 242. It instructed the envoy "to proceed to the Middle East to establish and maintain contacts with the states concerned in order to promote agreement and to assist efforts to achieve a peaceful and accepted settlement." Israeli diplomats had feared Mr. Brunner's mandate might be expanded — as Arab diplomats requested — beyond that specified in Resolution 242 to include tasks specified in later resolutions. These included calls for a U.N. representative to deal with the Palestinian issue, and for a U.N. mediator. But Mr. Perez de Cuellar's appointment specified that Mr. Brunner would act "in accordance with Resolution 242." U.N. spokesman Francois Giuliani told the Jerusalem Post there was no expansion of his mandate. Israel's U.N. mission later issued a statement saying Brunner's appointment raised questions as to whether the representative "has a role to assume at the present time" amid U.S. efforts to work towards a Middle East settlement — The Jerusalem Post.

Shiite cleric blasts violence, but asks Saddam for amnesty

NAJAF, Iraq (Agencies) — The Muslim World's most senior Shiite scholar has again condemned a wave of killings and violence in a rebellion against the government of President Saddam Hussein — but he asked him to amnesty rebels.

A group of reporters met Grand Ayatollah Abol Qassem Al Khoi Sunday.

The group was brought to his home in Najaf, holy to Shiites, on a tour by the Information Ministry. Najaf was caught up in civil unrest which flared after the end of the six-week Gulf war.

In the southern city, ravaged by days of fighting between government troops and rebels, Ayatollah Khoi denied that he was under duress.

"I thank God there is no pressure," said the influential, 90-year-old cleric.

He added: "Now everything is finished and there is nothing. I am comfortable now and there is nothing."

An official said rioters had controlled the city for more than 10 days. Rebels had claimed that the cleric earlier issued a decree of jihad against the government from Najaf, but he asked him to amnesty rebels.

In Amman, travellers from Iraq said Ayatollah Khoi had not made any call for jihad but had set up an administration in the holy sites to bring back order after government troops lost control of Najaf.

Ayatollah Khoi last week appeared with President Saddam whom he praised for crushing the unrest in the south. "Thanks be to God, God has enabled the president to stamp out this sedition," said Ayatollah Khoi.

Neighbouring Shiite Iran, accused by Baghdad of fanning unrest, led international protests over the episode, saying Ayatollah Khoi was kidnapped and forced to make a public show of support for President Saddam. It warned Iraq without his physical safety.

But Ayatollah Khoi told reporters

on Saturday he was not harassed by Baghdad, that the killing of Muslims was against Islam and he described anti-government rioters as "groups of ignorants," for whom he sought a general amnesty.

Ayatollah Khoi, who rarely makes public pronouncements, said of his meeting with President Saddam: "We were taken to Baghdad where we spent two nights after which we returned to Najaf."

His appearance in his home town before Iraqi journalists representing foreign organisations was evidently intended to answer accusations that he was under house arrest.

The tour also underlined government control of Najaf, as did a similar press visit last week to the other Shiite holy city of Karbala, both heavily damaged in civil strife.

Baghdad says the southern rebellion has been crushed. Similar unrest has swept the Kurdish areas of northern Iraq and opposition leaders leaders

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Iraq says U.S. wants to rob it of sovereignty

BAGHDAD (Agencies) — Baghdad accused the United States Sunday of trying to rob it of its sovereignty in a draft U.N. Security Council resolution calling for the elimination of Iraq's military power.

The U.S. draft resolution, circulated to council members on Thursday, also fixes the border between Iraq and Kuwait, sets up a United Nations observer force and demands war reparations from Iraq's oil revenues.

The Iraqi News Agency (INA) published the full text of the 12-page document, which is being discussed by the council's four

other permanent members — the Soviet Union, China, Britain and France.

The U.S. draft ceasefire resolution submitted to the Security Council... demonstrated the U.S. intent to rob Iraq of its sovereignty and to mortgage Iraq's resources," INA said.

Washington says a permanent Gulf war ceasefire would only go into effect when Iraq formally accepted all the conditions. Most economic sanctions would remain until the council decided otherwise, the draft resolution said.

It requires Iraq to accept the destruction and removal of its

ballistic missile systems and all "weapons of mass destruction" including chemical, biological and nuclear arms.

Commenting on the resolution, Iraq's Al Thawra newspaper, organ of the ruling Baath Party, said:

"Every paragraph and article in the draft resolution shows a clear bias and determination to intervene in Iraq's internal affairs in violation of the norms and charter of the United Nations."

"Never before has an international party presented a draft

League brought up the extension of U.S. economic sanctions against it.

"The purpose of the meeting is just to show up, to show a willingness to try and mend what was broken," said an Arab diplomat. "That in itself is an achievement."

"We cannot do without the Arab League. It is our symbol of liberation from foreign occupation. We cannot let it die because of splits and differences among the Arab states," he added.

The move to Cairo angered Tunisia, which at one point said it was thinking of withdrawing from league activities.

An official source in Algiers said the five countries in the Arab Maghreb Union — Algeria, Libya, Mauritania, Morocco and Tunisia — would probably be represented by ambassadors at the Cairo meeting.

Topics to be discussed in Cairo included Arab cooperation, the situation in the Israeli-occupied territories, Arab-African ties, liberation movements in South Africa and Arab-European dialogue.

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All League members except Iraq attend preparatory talks

CAIRO (Agencies) — All of the Arab League's 21 members except Iraq Sunday had preparatory talks to discuss the agenda of a meeting next week of the organization's permanent representatives.

This is the first Arab League function since the end of the Gulf war and Egyptian diplomats privately expressed their content with the high level of attendance.

The war had split the Arab League in half. Egypt and Saudi Arabia led Arab states which denounced Iraq.

An Arab League foreign ministers' meeting in Cairo last September drew only 12 of the members.

This is the first meeting of the permanent representative to be held after the end of the crisis which struck the Arab World," said Assad Al Assad, interim Secretary-General of the Arab

League. "Despite the splits created in the Arab World, the paralysis of joint action and the damage to the whole Arab Nation, the Arabs are moving and making efforts to heal the wounds," he said.

The agenda of next Saturday's meeting includes reports presented by various Arab states. One of them is a report on halting Arab boycott to certain companies that deal with Israel. The report suggested that the companies in exchange offer to build factories and plants in Arab countries similar to those they have in the Jewish state.

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The future of Baathism in Iraq depends on what happens next

War, rebellion spark debate over ideology

By Lamis K. Andoni
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

A FEW HOURS prior to the U.S. declaration of a ceasefire on March 3 the allied forces bombed the national and regional commands of the Baathist Party. The thunderous explosion destroyed the marble buildings and knocked off the statue of Michel Aflaq — the Syrian-born co-founder of the pan-Arab Baathist movement.

The attack was evidently a clear political warning to the regime and in retrospect a foretelling sign of the turmoil that post-war Iraq would go through.

But the destruction of the

Baathist Party headquarters was, in a metaphoric sense, also indicative of the questions raised in the post-war Iraq about the future of Baathism, if not pan-Arab nationalism, in the devastated country.

The appointment as prime minister of Dr. Saadoun Hamadi, the ideologue of the party, however, reflects the prevalence of the line of thinking which sees the preservation of Baathism in Iraq as crucial not only to the continuity of the regime but to the unity of the country.

This argument, which is said to reflect Iraqi President Saddam Hussein's thinking, was in the immediate term fostered

by the spectre of sectarian division which loomed over Iraq with the end of the war.

Many Baathists, including non-Iraqi Arabs who live in Iraq, have always argued that Baathism — as a pan-Arab nationalist and socialist ideology — has largely contributed to maintaining a united and secular country. Some have claimed that Baathism was able to solve the question of the ethnic minorities — but the frequent re-eruption of Kurdish insurrection has repeatedly questioned such a conclusion.

But the war, and more specifically the military defeat, has sparked a debate — believed to have incited party circles

— concerning Arab nationalism and Baathism in Iraq.

The most striking aspect of the debate involves an emergence of a line of thinking which opposes further Iraqi involvement in Arab affairs and causes. The call for an Iraqi political withdrawal from Arab national causes is viewed by analysts and officials in Iraq as a direct reaction to disillusionment over Arab solidarity with Iraq during and after the war.

Iraqis in general have overcome the shock over what they view as Arab betrayal by countries which joined the anti-Iraqi coalition and disappointment by the failure of the Arab people to support Iraq in any substantive way.

The feeling that the Iraqis were abandoned by the Arabs

brokered Camp David peace treaty with Israel in 1979.

But some analysts dismiss the significance of this school of thought, arguing that this a temporary reaction to the outcome of the Iraqi feeling of isolation. They warn, however, that it could become a serious trend if Baathism collapsed or the country was fragmented.

Historically, the line of Iraqi nationalist thinking, according to some Iraqi historians, has had influence during the monarchy era and the brief rule of the late Abdul Karim Qassem (1958-1963).

In the first days of the war, ordinary Iraqis who were interviewed by the Jordan Times in Baghdad were contemplating Palestinian and Arab attacks

constituted the main source of support for the regime, advocated democratisation and independent development of Iraq as opposed to giving priority to Arab unity.

Baathist officials, who say they are aware of Iraqi disillusionment with pan-Arab nationalism, argue that such sentiments were compounded by the failure of Arab and particularly Palestinian leaders to fulfil their pre-war pledges to retaliate against Western interests if and when war erupted.

In the first days of the war, ordinary Iraqis who were interviewed by the Jordan Times in Baghdad were contemplating Palestinian and Arab attacks

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Masri arrives in Tunisia

TUNIS (Agencies) — The Jordanian foreign minister, Tabe Al Masri, arrived here Sunday from Algeria after delivering a message from His Majesty King Hussein to Algerian President Chadli Benjedid. In Algiers, the minister said the Arab World should counter solutions to problems imposed by the outside world and that the international community should deal with the region's problems in the same spirit that it dealt with the Gulf crisis (see page 3). In Tunis, Mr. Masri was expected to meet with President Zine Al Abidine Ben Ali and Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) Chairman Yasser Arafat, sources said. Mr. Masri has already visited Libya and will travel to Morocco, Mauritania, Sudan, Yemen and Syria before returning home.



KING HOSTSIFTAR: His Majesty King Hussein Sunday hosted an iftar at Basman Palace in honour of Lower House of Parliament members, heads of courts, heads of professional associations, information department directors, editors-in-chief, and some Royal family members. The audience attended Al Maghreb prayers (Petra photo).

Highness Prince Faisal Ibn Al Hussein, Prime Minister Mudar Badran, Royal Court Chief Sharif Zeid Ben Shaker, Chief Chamberlain Prince Ra'ad Ben Zeid and some Royal family members. The audience attended Al Maghreb prayers (Petra photo).

Iraqi cabinet reshuffle sign of positive change — Crown Prince

ATLANTA (Agencies) — His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan said in a CNN television interview Sunday that Iraq's cabinet reshuffle could signal the beginning of an "evolution."

He said Jordan was preparing an official paper to explain its position and clear up any questions about its role in the Gulf crisis.

Prince Hassan said Jordan hopes for progress in Iraq.

"We do not meddle in the internal affairs of Iraq," he said. "We fervently, passionately hope for the prosperity of the Iraqi people."

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Israel orders 4 expulsions; ministers clamour for more

OCCUPIED JERUSALEM (Agencies) — Israel Sunday ordered four Palestinian activists expelled from the occupied territories. Hardliners called for even stronger measures.

Such expulsions have drawn American and United Nations condemnation, but an Israeli foreign ministry official said the latest action was meant as a "warning" to the leaders of the Palestinian uprising.

Cabinet ministers defended the expulsion order and called for more to be banished, despite the objections of the United States.

After a meeting in which members of the right-wing government called for harsh measures to combat Palestinian attacks on Israelis, Religious Affairs Minister Avner Shai contended Washington's opposition to expulsions was unfair.

"If America had had to deal with such people, with such terrorism, they would have certainly used even more strict means but certainly they would deport people who are inciting against the government, who are preaching terrorism," he said.

The army announced expulsion

orders against four Palestinians from the Israeli-occupied Gaza Strip allegedly active on behalf of the mainstream Fatah movement, driving force behind the 39-month-old uprising.

The four men have the right to appeal to the supreme court, which has quashed only one banishment order since Israel occupied the Gaza Strip, West Bank and Golan Heights in the 1967 war.

If the orders are carried out, they will bring to 66 the number

(Continued on page 5)

"I think there probably was a slight misstatement," Gen. Schwarzkopf told reporters after an awards ceremony honouring French officers.

General Powell and I have discussed this and we're prepared to stay here quite some time in Saudi Arabia because it is going to take us a long time to get all the equipment out that we have to," he said.

Gen. Schwarzkopf also said, "we're prepared to stay in Iraq as long as we have to, but, of course, we're

Iraqi reparations — how would it happen?

By Galina Vromen

Reuter

THE HAGUE — International legal experts are starting to grapple with the complicated mechanics of how Iraq might be made to repay the enormous damages stemming from its invasion of Kuwait.

Kuwait has already estimated its own damages from the occupation at \$100 billion. The United States and Britain have told citizens to start filing claims for damage or destruction of businesses and property.

At the United Nations, a U.S. preliminary draft resolution for a permanent Gulf war ceasefire suggests a fund be created to meet war compensation claims against Iraq. Into it would be paid an unstated percentage of the value of Iraq's petroleum exports.

A commission would be set up to administer the fund, and the U.N. secretary general would be asked to present recommendations within 30 days on ways of paying the compensation.

But the draft of the resolution obtained by Reuters is extremely complicated and likely to go through several revisions in coming weeks.

Experts are meanwhile studying reparations procedures used after World War II, and the workings of the Iran-U.S. claims tribunal in the Hague which settles financial disputes arising from the 1979 revolution in Iran.

The legal groundwork for reparations was set in U.N. Security Council Resolution 674 which holds Iraq responsible for damages stemming from its invasion of Kuwait and calls on countries to file claims for financial compensation.

"The first big question is whether an agreement will be reached with Iraq on the (process for) reparations," said lawyer

Arthur Rovine, agent for the United States when the Iran-U.S. tribunal first opened in 1981 and now in private practice in New York City.

Most experts say Iraq is in such dire straits — it was \$90 billion in debt even before the war — that it is unrealistic to expect it to pay massive reparations that could further destabilise the country.

"There may be some sort of symbolic reparation, but there is no way they will really be able to pay up," said Terry Gill, a professor of international law at Utrecht University.

If Iraq refuses to discuss any payments, the allies could use frozen Iraqi funds abroad to compensate some claimants.

Mr. Rovine said official sources had told him four to five billion dollars of Iraqi assets were frozen worldwide, about one billion dollar of that in the United States and a similar amount in Britain.

Since most of the assets are in the West, it is unlikely that citizens of other countries — particularly the many guest workers who lost their life's savings — would ever get compensation by that route, experts said.

"Frozen assets would cover just a fraction of the claims. If we can get or impose an agreement with Iraq, more possibilities would open up," Mr. Rovine said.

With Iraq's agreement, there are several scenarios for how reparations could work.

The U.N.-backed International Court of Justice in the Hague could be asked for an advisory opinion reinforcing U.N. Resolution 674 and on the amount Iraq should pay, said Peter Kooijmans, professor of public international law at Leiden University.

But other experts do not favour that course.

Reparation claims could be handled in bilateral negotiations

between Iraq and countries demanding compensation, probably with arbitrators from neutral nations.

Once a total sum for each country was agreed, national commission could decide how to distribute the money among claimants. That method was used after World War II with arbitrators from neutral countries taking part.

Or the example of the Iran-U.S. claims tribunal in the Hague might be followed. The tribunal, with three neutral judges and each from the two countries, allows individuals and companies as well as the two governments to bring their case.

The tribunal was set up under a treaty that freed 52 U.S. hostages in the American embassy in Tehran in 1979 and has resolved more than 4,000 cases so far, with U.S. claims most being met from frozen Iranian assets.

The tribunal was started with the help of the Permanent Court of Arbitration housed in the same complex as the International Court of Justice. It could again be asked to be helped form a tribunal.

Hans Jonkman, secretary general of the arbitration court, while stressing that no-one had yet asked the court to help, told Reuters it could make available physical facilities, staff and expertise for setting up a tribunal or bilateral commissions.

"The new situation with Iraq is far more complicated than the situation that led to the Iran-U.S. tribunal because there are more than two countries involved," Mr. Jonkman said.

Mr. Gill said the anti-Iraq coalition countries may not want a tribunal because it could put Iraqi claims for civilian damage from allied bombing on an equal footing with their own claims.

"A tribunal might just not be practical," Mr. Rovine said.

Bush says Iraqi changes show Saddam still 'calling the shots'

WASHINGTON (R) — U.S. President George Bush Saturday brushed aside a government shakeup in Iraq as a move that shows Iraqi leader Saddam Hussein is still "calling the shots".

The president said the United States could not restore normal relations with Baghdad while Saddam Hussein remained in power.

"I would simply say that Saddam Hussein appears to still be calling the shots," Mr. Bush said at the White House following talks with Turkish President Turgut Ozal at Camp David, the presidential mountain retreat.

"As I have said before, normal relations with the United States cannot be effective with Saddam Hussein still calling the shots, still in power."

President Saddam appointed a 24-man government, bringing in seven new ministers and making Deputy Prime Minister Saadoun Hammadi, a Shi'ite Muslim, Iraq's prime minister — a position President Saddam had held.

Baghdad Radio reported that crowds turned out to greet the new prime minister when he visited towns in Southern Iraq.

Mr. Hammadi toured the provinces of Najaf and Qadissiyah, areas of post-Gulf war unrest, Baghdad Radio said. Baghdad says it has crushed the rebellion.

Mr. Bush said he and Mr. Ozal discussed the shakeup "at length" but concluded, "there are some interesting cabinet shifts, but nothing that appears to depart from Saddam Hussein's policies."

Iraqi opposition leaders in Syria scorned the new cabinet, saying President Saddam should step down "before it becomes too late."

"The revolt against Saddam will continue regardless of his false promises of Democracy and freedom," said Hassan Al Nakib, a former Iraqi general who is now a leading opposition figure.

The Bush administration has already provided Turkey with \$82 million in emergency military assistance in addition to \$55 million in the 1991 foreign aid budget. It has proposed increasing the 1992 allocation to \$703 million.

Congress Friday gave final legislative approval for an additional \$200 million to help offset Turkey's losses in the war. A White House official said Mr. Bush was expected to sign the bill that contains the aid.

The two leaders also discussed Cyprus, where Turkey has backed the Turkish Cypriot community with troops since a 1974 invasion that led to a breakaway state in the island's north.

The United States has been trying to promote a solution for the divided island, so far without success. U.N.-sponsored talks between Greek and Turkish Cypriots stalled a year ago.

Turkey has agreed in principle to allow the United States to store conventional ammunition inside its borders for use during a possible future crisis in the Middle East.

Washington has been concerned about the length of time it took to ship arms and equipment into the Gulf region to deal with Iraq's invasion of Kuwait back in August.

MIDDLE EAST NEWS IN BRIEF

Turkey: Water not a political weapon

ANKARA (R) — Turkey, which controls one of the Middle East's mightiest rivers, will never use water as a political weapon, State Minister Kamran Inan said Saturday. "In the coming 10 to 15 years water will become more vital commodity in the Middle East than oil," Mr. Inan told the semi-official Anatolian news agency. "We see water as a means of cooperation... not as a political weapon or a means for political pressure. We did not consider (using it as a weapon) during the (Gulf) war, we will not consider it in the future," Mr. Inan said. Turkey's diversion of the Euphrates River for a month last year to fill the lake behind its new Ataturk Dam led to a dispute with the downstream states of Iraq and Syria. Ankara said it made up for the shortfall by releasing before the cut more than 500 cubic metres of water a second agreed under a 1987 protocol with Damascus. Turkey says its 1987 proposal of a "peace water pipeline" to carry water to Middle East and Gulf states from its southern Seyhan and Ceyhan rivers can be a base for future stability and economic cooperation in the region.

Indonesia to check pilgrimage facilities

JAKARTA (R) — Indonesia, whose nationals accounted for over a third of the deaths in a tunnel disaster near Mecca last year, will send an advance team to prepare for this year's Haj pilgrimage to Saudi Arabia, the official Antara news agency said Sunday. It quoted Religious Minister Munawir Sjadjali as saying the team would in particular look at preventing a repeat of last July's disaster when 1,400 pilgrims died in a crowded tunnel close to the Holy City of Mecca. The Saudi response at the time, terming it an act of God, caused considerable resentment in Indonesia, which is home to the world's largest Muslim population. A Saudi Arabian humanitarian group in January promised to provide compensation to the 630 victims' families. About 50,000 Indonesian Muslims have so far registered to go on this year's pilgrimage.

Bombs explode in Istanbul

ANKARA (R) — Bombs damaged the stock exchange building and two banks in Istanbul during the night but caused no casualties. The Anatolian news agency said Sunday. It said one bomb exploded before midnight, damaging the entrance to the Istanbul stock exchange building and a brokerage house in the same premises in the waterfront Karakoy district. Soon afterwards bombs damaged branches of two private banks, Is Bank and Yapi Kredi in different parts of the city, it said. There was no immediate claim of responsibility. The outlawed Dev-Sol (Revolutionary Left) group, which said it was behind Friday's killing of an American businessman in Istanbul, claimed it planted six bombs which blasted six banks and offices, most with U.S. connections, the previous weekend.

Libya astonished by Ethiopia's expulsion

NAIROBI (AP) — Libya says it is astonished by Ethiopia's expulsion of its ambassador and another Libyan diplomat from the Horn of African nation and will investigate the action. In a statement published by the Libyan news agency JANA and broadcast on state-run television, Libya expressed an "astonishment and ignorance of the reasons behind the Ethiopian authorities' measure." The Saturday broadcast said that according to political analysts in Ethiopia's capital, Addis Ababa, Libya was suspected of arming Ethiopian rebels who have won two provinces and advanced to within 140 kilometres of the capital in a month-old offensive. Libya, which has denied any involvement with the insurgents, said it had "initiated a rigorous investigation to find out the heart of the matter."

Doctors in Sudan urged to charge less

KHARTOUM (R) — A cabinet minister has called on doctors in Sudan to charge less in their private clinics. The Khartoum daily Al Guwat Al Muzzalalah said Sunday that the cabinet affairs minister, Colonel Al Taveel Mohammad Khair, himself a doctor, told specialists employed at the Health Ministry that their fees for private patients were too much. He told the doctors their work was a humanitarian duty and they should charge more reasonable fees. Doctors in Khartoum, where the minimum monthly wage is 300 Sudanese pounds (\$66), charge patients at least 100 pounds (\$22) a visit.

44 dead in Morocco bus crash

RABAT (R) — Forty-four people were killed and 18 were injured in a collision between a bus and a car on a Moroccan highway near Tangiers Saturday night, Moroccan Television reported. Five of the injured were seriously hurt, the TV said, quoting rescue workers at the scene. No further details were immediately available.

U.S. businessman charged for Libya deal

MIAMI (R) — U.S. authorities have charged a Miami aircraft executive with illegally shipping aircraft parts to help repair a fleet of Libyan transport planes. Duane Egli, 58, who appeared briefly in court in Miami on Friday, was ordered held without bail pending hearing in a state district court. He is accused of violating a presidential order on trading with Libya. The U.S. Customs Service, in a statement to the court, accuses Mr. Egli also of planning to supply mechanics to repair the fleet of C-130 Hercules aircraft and to refit one as a flying command post for Libyan leader Muammar Qadhafi. Mr. Egli is said to own an aircraft repair firm in Belgium, Flanders Aircraft and Maintenance, and Liberian World Airways. The U.S. customs statement said fame made the deal through a Libyan middleman in Switzerland. Mr. Egli was arrested on Thursday by federal agents in Miami.

Israel on summer time

TEL AVIV (AP) — Israel moved their clocks an hour ahead at midnight Saturday to start a 160-day period of daylight savings time. The extra daylight is expected to save the country millions of dollars in energy costs, but has long been a source of controversy in Israel, where religious Jews object to the uncomfortable exchanges it makes in their prayer schedule. Jewish law mandates that morning prayers be uttered at daybreak, making it difficult for many religiously observant Jews to go to synagogue at dawn and then get to work on time. By a compromise struck several years ago, the government curtails summer time early by turning the clocks back again before the Jewish new year or Rosh Hashanah holiday. This year, the clock switches back on Aug. 31.

Guns hamper relief work in war-devastated north Somalia

BERBERA, Somalia (R) — Fresh from its victory over government forces, the Somal National Movement (SNM) is finding hard to keep the peace and ensure that foreign relief organisations can work safely in devastated northern Somalia.

"Guns seem to outnumber people by about 10 to one in these parts. It's a big problem how to get them off the streets," said SNM Vice-Chairman Hassan Jama.

The International committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), one of the few foreign aid organisations in this rugged, sparsely-populated region, temporarily pulled out last Thursday after three men

stole one of its last vehicles at gunpoint.

Its 19 foreign staff were running a hospital for war wounded in the Red Sea port of Berbera and the capital Mogadishu.

Thousands of young men were armed for the SNM's campaign and former rebels, now idle, still swagger with their weapons around northern towns.

"They have been brought up to fight and they don't really know how to do anything else," said ICRC surgeon Robin Gray in Berbera hospital, now in the hands of local Somali doctors.

Fighters from both sides will ward that spill out into a courtyard.

The ICRC kept the hospital running throughout January's fighting, even though at one point SNM and government troops raged through the operating theatre and a doctor was hit by a bullet and badly wounded.

Looters struck the ICRC's warehouse in Berbera and most of its cars were stolen.

The ICRC had hoped to signal to other aid organisations that it was possible to work safely in northern Somalia. Its decision to leave, while pledging to return as soon as possible, was a blow to relief efforts.

"We need every human need. We have inherited nothing," said Hassan Kayd Abdulle, SNM chief in the town of Burao, 100 kilometres south of Berbera. "We have captured nothing but destruction."

Cities like Burao and Hargeisa, the capital of the region, were once thriving livestock trading centres.

Viewed from the air, Hargeisa is now a vision of catastrophe with roofless houses stretching over the arid plain. Thousands of tonnes of tin roofing were carried away by residents fleeing the fighting.

They don't have the equipment here," he said. "They need to bring their results back to the states."

He also noted that while the preliminary results unearthed no immediate acute reaction to the toxins "we just don't know what the long-term effect will be."

No high level of toxic gases yet in Gulf region

RIYADH (AP) — Preliminary results of an American study indicate toxic gases have not yet reached a danger level in Kuwait and Saudi Arabia, U.S. officials said.

Between 500 and 600 Kuwaiti oil wells were set on fire allegedly by Iraqi troops, blackening the sky and raising fears that toxic fumes would poison the atmosphere.

According to a U.S. embassy official, a nine-member team including representatives from the Environmental Protection Agency, the centres for disease control and the U.S. Public Health Service have been monitoring air quality in the area for the past two weeks.

The official said the team was conducting both air quality tests and epidemiological studies in Riyadh, Dhahran, Kuwait City, and Camp Freedom in Kuwait to determine if there are serious

health risks.

"Even as close as 100 metres from some of the fires, the preliminary results show no particularly high levels of toxic gases," said the official.

The team has also surveyed hospital emergency room admissions and discovered no significant change in the number of respiratory complaints before and after the fires were set.

The embassy official stressed, however, that the studies have not yet determined the effect of particles small enough to lodge themselves in lungs.

"They don't have the equipment here," he said. "They need to bring their results back to the states."

He also noted that while the preliminary results unearthed no immediate acute reaction to the toxins "we just don't know what the long-term effect will be."

JORDAN TIMES DAILY GUIDE AND CALENDAR

PRAYER TIMES

04:12	Fajr	025303, Tel. 025343
05:30	(Sunrise) Dhuhr	025311, Tel. 0253131
11:42	Asr	025261
15:01	Maghreb	025261
17:54	Isha'	025326
19:11	Isha'	025326

CHURCHES

St. Mary of Nazareth Church	Swieqieh	Tel. 810740

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Jordan, Algeria agree on ways of tackling post-Gulf war issues

ALGERIA (J.T.) — The Algerian government has displayed full understanding of the Jordanian political stand vis-a-vis Arab and international issues, and Amman and Algiers have agreed on means of confronting the post-war era, according to Foreign Minister Taher Al Masri.

In a telephone call with Radio Jordan, Mr. Masri, who Saturday arrived here for a two-day visit, said that the Jordanian position, which is well known to the Arab countries, has not changed and the Jordanian government advocates the idea of Arab countries embarking on preparations for the coming storm.

"Jordan's position with regard to the Palestine question remains unchanged and Amman believes in the need for coordinating Arab countries stands with regard to this important issue," the minister said.

Mr. Masri had visited Libya before going to Algeria in the course of a tour of the Arab Maghreb Union countries. He said that his trip was designed to boost inter-Arab solidarity in the post-war era and to pave the



Three days of heavy rain have turned a public park into a pool (photo by Yousef Al 'Allan)

Storm, rain bring death toll to eight

AMMAN (J.T.) — The death toll from the storms and the heavy rains in the southern regions of the Kingdom Sunday rose to eight, with the Civil Defence Department (CDD), reporting Sunday that three citizens in the Karak region had drowned.

Local press reports and eyewitnesses said earlier that five people were killed and 80 others were injured as a result of landslides and road accidents as well as the collapse of bridges, mainly in the Tafileh and Karak regions which took the brunt of the storm that ended Sunday.

Tafileh and Karak received more than 120 millimetres of rain in just 48 hours, the highest level in the Kingdom, according to the Meteorology Department.

Reports said that 50 families in the Wadi Mousa and Wadi Al Mujib areas were rescued from the streams.

In Maan, 14 citizens were rescued by CDD men who also took to safety the passengers of 30 cars which were cut off by the rising levels of the water.

No new laws for cars of expatriates

By Nur Safi
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — Jordanian expatriates and Palestinians who live in Iraq and Kuwait before Aug. 2 have had a hard time since the crisis, but exemption of taxes for customs duty on their cars has been lifted at the bottom of the hold making it impossible to be opened and the contents checked unless taken overboard for inspection.

Many vessels with Jordan-bound goods stopped coming to Aqaba Port since the start of the hostilities in the Gulf region.

Ship harassment still goes on in the Red Sea

AMMAN (J.T.) — A cargo vessel laden with goods imported from northern Europe has been intercepted by the naval forces of the U.S.-led alliance while on its way to the port of Aqaba and turned away back, according to an official for the Jordan National Shipping Lines.

He said that the vessel was heading from north Europe towards Aqaba carrying containers with goods imported by Jordanian merchants when it was intercepted for inspection. He said that when inspection could not be done on board, the vessel was ordered to head for Suez in Egypt for proper inspection of the containers.

The incident, which occurred Friday, March 22, was the latest in a series of incidents in which vessels with Jordan-bound cargo were turned back and forced to

dump their shipments at Jeddah, in Saudi Arabia, or Egyptian ports where a great deal of the goods were either stolen or sold in auction without their owners' knowledge.

According to the Shipping Agents Association (SAA) in Jordan, the interception of ships is still being conducted by navy vessels from the United States, France, Spain and Greece.

SAA President Tawfiq Kawar told the Jordan Times recently that some of the containers on board vessels are normally shipped at the bottom of the hold making it impossible to be opened and the contents checked unless taken overboard for inspection.

Many vessels with Jordan-bound goods stopped coming to Aqaba Port since the start of the hostilities in the Gulf region.

JNRCS, U.S. team raise aid for Iraq

AMMAN (J.T.) — A team representing the U.S. Earth Steward Organisation and the Gulf Humanitarian Relief arrived in Amman Sunday on a two-week visit to Jordan, during which they will visit refugee camps in Jordan and meet with people from the Jordan National Red Crescent Society (JNRCS).

The team brought in a tonne of basic medicine and a quantity of baby milk, in addition to cash assistance, which the organisation's members raised from the United States.

The team's assistance is the first shipment of aid to Jordan, which will receive further aid on a monthly basis.

Jordan is the first victim of the Gulf crisis after Kuwait and Iraq, according to reports by the United Nations.

The team comprises representatives of the Gulf Peace Team, the Quakers and the Manonites.

Saturday a convoy of trucks carrying 200 tonnes of food and drugs, donated by Jordanian citizens, left for Baghdad. The team took to Iraq 43 tonnes of drugs and medical supplies as well as food donated by citizens and humanitarian organisations.

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Saturday a convoy

Jordan Times

An independent Arab political daily published in English by the Jordan Press Foundation.

Established 1975

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When it rains, it pours

HEAVY rainstorms during the past 72 hours raised to about the annual average the amount of rainfall which Jordan expects each year, and as such they have brought with them a blessing for our people and the whole water-thirsty region. But, on the other hand, the rains have brought with them suffering and misery for many who actually prayed for their fall, especially in southern regions of the Kingdom where reports say at least eight people drowned and more than 80 were injured as well as others who are missing. In addition, vast areas of agricultural land are reported to have sustained heavy damage as did many agricultural installations, while many of the culverts and the bridges built over the roads and streams in the south were washed away by heavy floods and raging streams. The inhabitants of low-lying areas had to be rescued and evacuated to safer ground, while farmers lost many of their livestock, according to the reports. While admitting that natural disasters like this one are bound to happen without giving us enough time to avert them, one can only point out that since rain can be considered a normal phenomenon and an annual occurrence in winter time, it is only reasonable to think and to say that precautionary measures concerning people inhabiting low-lying areas could have been taken. Maintenance of roads, bridges as well as culverts and other facilities to drain away the rainwater and prevent flooding could be done on a regular basis before the winter season in anticipation of floods. Apart from the loss of life, the country which has replenished its aquifers and reservoirs behind the dams has sustained damage estimated at millions of dinars. The concerned parties like the ministries of public works, and municipalities, the Civil Defence Department as well as farm owners themselves are to blame for failing to take proper action in this regard; and, if anything, the loss because of the storms points to lack of coordination among these parties who are confronted with the same situation year after year. They should realize that it takes only a little investment in time before the rainy season to save a great deal later on. The Civil Defence Department in particular has got to get its act together since they were many claims over the past two days that emergency help failed to reach outlying areas in the south and there were persistent reports yesterday that several people stranded there could not be reached or rescued until late last night. It is not enough to demand that the government compensate the farmers and other citizens for their losses as a result of the damage they sustain due to weather conditions as has been the practice so far and as has been demanded by some writers in the local press. What is badly needed now is awareness as to the need of addressing the situation, and practical steps to help us avoid a repetition in the coming seasons.

ARABIC PRESS COMMENTARIES

THE Gulf war officially ended with the destruction of Iraq's economic and social infrastructure, but Washington's war on Iraq is far from over, said Al Ra'i Arabic daily Sunday. America's war on Iraq has entered a new phase represented in starving the Iraqi people and forcing the Iraqi leadership to give up arms and weapons with which it can defend the Iraqi people, the paper noted. Despite the elapse of several weeks following the ceasefire in the war, the U.N. Security Council has not yet reached a resolution on a formal ceasefire that would give Iraq a breathing space, the paper pointed out. It said that the United States is determined to obstruct any resolution on a ceasefire because it wants to impose its own humiliating conditions on the Iraqis and render Baghdad helpless. In contrast, the United States is not demanding from Israel the same conditions about its own weapons, it is condemning Israel's continued occupation of Arab lands in Palestine and is not taking any steps towards implementing U.N. Security Council resolutions concerning Palestine, the paper noted. The paper called the readers attention to this situation and also to recent Israeli leaders' statements that they would give up no land in return for an end to the state of war with the Arab states, and they would never recognise the rights of the Palestinians in their homeland. It said that the Arab countries ought to take joint action now to put an end to Israel's arrogance, and enable the Palestinians to regain their own rights in implementation of Security Council resolutions.

The veil that concealed the true face of Iran has at last fallen to reveal that it is ruled by a tyrannical political party that has been hiding its true nature behind Islam, claiming to be the only advocate of religion in the whole world, says a columnist in Al Dustour daily Sunday. Mohammad Daoudieh says that the Muslims of the world had been hoping that Iran would come to the help of the Iraqi people in their plight and in their confrontation with the great satan, but what happened was that Tehran rushed after the war to get a piece of cake, and when it was denied that it turned to its own means of ensuring its role in Iraq. The writer says that the Arab and Islamic worlds were shocked to hear about the Iranian actions, and their stabbing in the back of the Iraqi people after the Gulf war. The Iranians have not only sent in their trouble makers with arms to cause disturbances in southern Iraq, but have now announced their refusal to return Iraqi planes and pilots; and is taking a hostile stand vis-a-vis Baghdad in a flagrant act of treachery, the writer continues. Indeed, he says, the Tehran leadership has proved to the world that it is turning the Iranian nation into one that can only follow in the pattern of other countries that embody conspiracies and acts of intimidation among other tactics to achieve its own goals.

Weekly Political Pulse

Time ripe for international conference

ONE truly wonders what does Washington see to be so objectionable in the holding of a U.N. Security Council-sponsored conference on the Middle East that it keeps pushing the ideas away.

The now famous excuse for rejecting the conference idea has been coined time again as a time factor in the sense that time, we are told, is inappropriate to convene such a meeting. Such an explanation does not really hold much water in view of the fact that 24 years have passed since Israel began its occupation of Arab territories and its annexation of Jerusalem and the Golan Heights, if anything, time is overdue and not inappropriate. What is worse, from the time factor point of view, is that Tel Aviv has frustrated every conceivable peaceful attempt to settle the Arab-Israeli conflict beginning with the Dr. Jarring mission in the late sixties to U.S. Secretary of State James Baker's own desperate initiative a couple of years ago.

Against such a backdrop and in the light of Israel's continued rejection of every conceivable initiative, surely time has become ripe and propitious to push ahead for a solution to the Palestinian case and the broader Arab-Israeli conflict in a more powerful and determined manner. It so happens that a meeting between the parties to the Arab-Israeli conflict under the aegis of the U.N. Security Council can provide the very mechanism to proceed expeditiously with the task of solving once and for all the decades-long conflicts of the Middle East. When all fails, Washington

and the other capitals with clout should be prepared to entertain such an operational mechanism as provided by the conference idea under the U.N. umbrella, rather than shun it away. As the parties to the conflict are projected to pursue their own respective bilateral negotiations under the broad umbrella of the conference, there can be no harm whatsoever in giving the international conference forum a chance to succeed when everything else had been tried and failed till this point in time.

Washington and Tel Aviv are the only two capitals which are still on record as opposing the convening of an international conference on the Middle East. This harmonization of positions between the two countries cannot be coincidental or fortuitous. More likely than not, the U.S. negative vote on the idea is due to the Israeli rejection of the very notion of being crammed into an international conference under the spotlight of the international community for fear of becoming accountable to the international community for every untenable position that it takes in the negotiating process. If Israel fears about the conference can be dispelled, then Washington can be talked into accepting the international conference principle. When that big order is accomplished, then, no doubt, Washington, would remove its reservations about holding such a conference. Or one can proceed to address this opposition to the conference methodology the other way around, namely, to convince the U.S. first about the functionality and usefulness of the

conference mechanism as a prelude to soliciting Israel's endorsement of this route for the settlement of its conflicts with the Arab parties.

Whatever is the scenario adopted to rectify the U.S.-Israeli anomoly on the Security Council's sponsored peace talks, time is anything but inappropriate to proceed ahead with full speed to end the problems of the Middle East. This does not to suggest that time cannot be taken or should not be taken to conduct the necessary preparatory work for convening the elusive conference. On the contrary, preparatory work would be necessary before a full-fledged conference on the Middle East could be held. What is urgently called for now is the decision to hold such international negotiations and then to begin the process of preparing for the conference including the framework of its agenda and the breakdown of negotiations on topical basis or otherwise. The main thing is to take a formal decision on holding a conference and that would serve as a stimulus for the additional decisions that need to be taken to make the conference idea a success.

The sticking point will always be to win at least Tel Aviv's acceptance of negotiating peace with the Arab parties under the umbrella of U.N. Security Council if not its blessing. Without Israel's wholehearted acceptance, the conference idea is doomed before it even begins.

Glaspie tells her version of meeting with President Saddam

WASHINGTON — Iraqi president Saddam Hussein was convinced last July that the United States would go to war in the Gulf if necessary, but he may have believed he could win, the U.S. ambassador to Iraq, April Glaspie, said March 21.

"I'm absolutely sure that he knew that we would fight... that he knew we meant business... I think it is quite possible he truly believed he could beat us," Glaspie told the House Foreign Affairs Subcommittee on Europe and the Middle East. The "sycophants around Saddam" were trying to prove Iraqi weapons could compete with American arms, she said.

Glaspie said that in their only private meeting, barely one week after Iraq's invasion of Kuwait, "I told him our policy was that we would defend our vital interests." She said, "We did not realize he would be so foolish as to ignore our repeated and crystal clear warnings... I don't take comfort that everybody else that I was working with in Baghdad, including the Arab ambassadors, came to that same wrong conclusion."

Her testimony March 21 was scrutinized by congressmen, some challenging and others defending the administration's policies on Iraq before its Aug. 2 invasion of Kuwait.

Representative Lee Hamilton (Democrat of Indiana) cited a series of administration statements to try to show the United States gave conflicting signals. Hamilton said that after Iraq had massed troops near the Kuwaiti border, U.S. officials had stated publicly that the United States had no defence commitments with Kuwait and that if force were used Washington would be extremely concerned.

"It is a record that confused me. If it confused this subcommittee... it is not unreasonable for me to think it might confuse Saddam Hussein as well," Hamilton said.

Representative Tom Lantos (Democrat of California) said that despite Hussein's massed 20,000 Iraqi soldiers on the border of Kuwait, there was a "persistent theme by the State Department that this man can be dealt with... You tell us that you were sure that Saddam Hussein

Nizar Hamdoon.

On July 24, Glaspie said, at the request of the government of the United Arab Emirates, the U.S. announced a joint military operation in the Gulf. "At midnight that night I was convened, and protests were made. I was asked if it was also true that our fleet had redeployed," Glaspie recounted.

That morning, (July 25), when the Foreign Ministry officially opened, Glaspie said, she returned with a statement by State Department spokesman Margaret Tutwiler in which the U.S. called for a peaceful settlement of Iraq's disputes with its neighbours. "Iraq and others know that there is no place for coercion and intimidation in a civilised world," read the Tutwiler statement which Glaspie handed to Deputy Foreign Minister Hamdoon.

"I asked that if it hadn't already arrived at the presidency that it be taken there immediately. About an hour later, I was called to see the president," Glaspie recounted. "Now, during that meeting, did he say specifically he would not use force against Kuwait?"

"In my 25 years in diplomacy I have not been personally aware of a case where any government — no matter what the temptation — has issued such a transcript, other than Saddam Hussein's government," said Glaspie. "The point, of course is credibility."

Asked by Representative Steven Solarz (Democrat of New York) if she would now object to having the cable reporting her meeting with the Iraqi president turned over to the Foreign Affairs committee on a classified basis, Glaspie said she would object.

"In my 25 years in diplomacy I have not been personally aware of a case where any government — no matter what the temptation — has issued such a transcript, other than Saddam Hussein's government," said Glaspie. "The point, of course is credibility."

Solarz challenged Glaspie's objections. "I would hope the chairman at some point will consider the possibility of issuing a subpoena to obtain the cable, in the event it's not possible to get it through more friendly means," he said.

"There certainly is no question (of confidentiality) about it," Glaspie responded.

She pointed out that not only she but President Mubarak and Saudi Arabia's King Fahd confirm identical understandings in separate conversations with Saddam Hussein. Moreover, she said, two different Iraqi ministers, including Hussein Kamel, on July 28 and 29, "said flatly, 'We are not going to use troops.'"

"But you never said to him (Saddam Hussein), 'Mr. President, if you go across the line with your forces into Kuwait, we will fight,'" Hamilton asked.

"Absolutely not. I did not need to say that. If I had felt that I needed to say that, I would have asked the (U.S.) president — after the meeting — for permission to say that," Glaspie responded. "I have no doubt in my mind that he knew that we meant business. And certainly, it's up to

the (U.S.) president, not up to me, to decide how to execute the policy."

In her testimony to the House subcommittee, Glaspie was asked whether she was aware that after the Iraqi transcript was made public on Sept. 11, an unidentified senior State Department official was quoted in The New York Times as having said it was "essentially correct."

She said she did not know who said that or why. She said that the official perhaps meant the "context" was generally correct, but that, as far as she was concerned, about 20 per cent of the content was either distorted, falsified, or dropped.

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Solarz challenged Glaspie's objections. "I would hope the chairman at some point will consider the possibility of issuing a subpoena to obtain the cable, in the event it's not possible to get it through more friendly means," he said.

"There certainly is no question (of confidentiality) about it," Glaspie responded.

She pointed out that not only she but President Mubarak and Saudi Arabia's King Fahd confirm identical understandings in separate conversations with Saddam Hussein. Moreover, she said, two different Iraqi ministers, including Hussein Kamel, on July 28 and 29, "said flatly, 'We are not going to use troops.'"

"But you never said to him (Saddam Hussein), 'Mr. President, if you go across the line with your forces into Kuwait, we will fight,'" Hamilton asked.

"Absolutely not. I did not need to say that. If I had felt that I needed to say that, I would have asked the (U.S.) president — after the meeting — for permission to say that," Glaspie responded. "I have no doubt in my mind that he knew that we meant business. And certainly, it's up to

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Asked

Egyptians continue to fight for human rights

By George Shadroui

CAIRO — If information released by the Egyptian Organisation of Human Rights is correct, Dr. Mohammed Mandour's nightmare began just before dawn on Feb. 8 when Egyptian state security officers came to his house and demanded to question him.

Over the next two weeks, Mandour was imprisoned, detained without charges, routinely tortured and threatened with death if he reported his mistreatment to the press. Mandour's only "crime" seems to have been his association with the Palestinian Red Crescent's Palestine Hospital in Cairo, where he headed the psychiatric department.

As a result of efforts exerted by the EOHR and Amnesty International, among other human rights advocates, Mandour was finally released on Feb. 23.

Mandour's ordeal is one of a series of incidents that has created grave concern in Egypt that President Mubarak's regime — particularly as a result of tensions in the Gulf — is growing increasingly repressive.

In addition to the detention and torture of Mandour, the EOHR, whose 1,000 plus members cover the political and ideological spectrum, cites the government's response to

student protests at Cairo University.

Thousands of students were protesting the American-led ground war on campus when government troops, using plastic bullets, opened fire. Local papers reported that one student was killed. The EOHR says it has the names of four victims. In either case, it was the first time in more than 40 years that the government used live ammunition against students, said Bahy Al Deen Hassan, general-secretary of the EOHR.

The EOHR also charges Egyptian security forces of systematically arresting and torturing Muslim fundamentalists, journalists, Palestinians and human rights advocates, with a recent emphasis on those who opposed Egypt's participation in the Gulf war.

Ironically, such actions have been taking place at a time when much has been made of Egypt's movement towards greater freedom and democracy. Under the Mubarak regime, opposition parties and the press have been allowed to criticise the government openly (provided they do not attack Mubarak directly). The dismissal of the previous minister of interior, the controversial and brutal Zaki Badr, brought a sigh of relief from many in Cairo.

Egypt's recent elections were widely perceived as the freest ever held in the country. This is a critical moment in Egypt," Hassan said. "What will happen in the next weeks or months, I don't know. I hope the situation will improve."

Saad Eddin Ibrahim, a sociologist at the American University in Cairo and a long-time observer of Egypt's political and human rights development, said it is in times of great stress that the government overreacts.

This was the case towards the end of the Gulf war and in

October after the assassination of Rifaat Al Mahgoub, speaker of parliament. But he added that Egypt still compares favourably with most other countries in the region.

"You don't have executions or people disappearing," he said. "Egypt by Middle East standards seems alright. But by my own standards as a human rights advocate, it leaves a lot to be desired."

The methods of torture are gruesome and extremely painful for the victims. Beatings with whips and sticks are common.

Prisoners are subjected to electric shocks on sensitive parts of the body. Some have been strapped to an arroza — an Egyptian cross — and then beaten. Others have had their hands and feet tied behind their backs only to be suspended in doorways until they lose consciousness.

Mandour himself was subjected to repeated beatings and electric prods applied to his sexual organs. A lawyer for EOHR who was finally allowed to visit Mandour said there were black spots caused by electricity on parts of his body. His head also had been shaved.

Interrogators repeatedly questioned Mandour about possible links to Palestinian leaders and groups, according to information released by the EOHR. Dozens of other pris-

oners, including journalists who opposed the Gulf war, are being held without charges. All of this occurs even though Egypt is a signatory to several international conventions and resolutions prohibiting torture.

The EOHR, which has also sharply criticised opposition groups that advocate or incite violence, argues that the government can maintain security and enforce the law without resorting to methods that have become all too common since Mubarak took power in the wake of President Sadat's assassination in 1981. Even women and children have been victims of beatings and psychological terror.

To the government's credit, Hassan said, the EOHR has been allowed to hold press conferences and to level charges in the press. In addition, the government has promised to establish direct channels of communication between the ministry of interior, which is responsible for state security, and the group.

But one Egyptian human rights advocate, who asked not to be named, said there is widespread fear that the minister of interior has lost control of elements in the state security apparatus, the implication being that the controversial policies are directed from inside the executive branch — by people close to the president himself — Middle East Times.

Prince

(Continued from page 1)

He said Iraq suffered 100,000 military casualties and an unknown number of civilian casualties in the war.

Hamami urges conference

In Washington, Jordan's Ambassador Hussein Hamami Sunday stressed the need to step up efforts to find a peaceful settlement of the Middle East problem.

In a meeting with the Writers Association in Washington, Mr. Hamami called for holding an international peace conference on the Middle East, attended by all parties to the conflict.

Mr. Hamami expressed amazement at the belief that Jordan's stand on the Gulf crisis was contrary to peace when the Kingdom was working out a peaceful solution since the outset of the crisis.

"I'm really at a loss to understand why our attitude is contrary to peace," he said. "The thrust of our effort in the Gulf had been to achieve a peaceful settlement between Iraq and Kuwait; and we had it in our hand in the first 48 or 72 hours, but we were blocked."

"Now it may be too early to go into the details of what happened... it will come out clearly and we will be proven right that had we been allowed the opportunity to bring about that peaceful settlement, then the suffering of the Kuwaitis, the suffering of the Iraqis, the suffering of the region and the potential destabilisation... would have been avoided," he said.

Expulsions

(Continued from page 1)

of Palestinians expelled from their native land since the start of the uprising.

The Palestinians served with expulsion orders have been imprisoned for ordering and committing anti-Israeli "violence," the army said.

It said they were not directly involved in recent stabbings, but Defence Minister Moshe Arens accused them of inciting the atmosphere "that leads in the end to murder."

Their lawyer, Abdul Rahman Abu Nasser, said he would appeal the order Monday before a military review committee.

If turned down, the Palestinians can then appeal to Israel's supreme court. The high court has never overturned an army expulsion order.

The orders and growing violence were discussed for two hours at the weekly cabinet session.

Agriculture Minister Rafael Eitan told reporters that Arab guerrillas should be executed, their bones torn down and their families expelled.

Another minister, Rehavam Zeevi, demanded a sweeping and permanent curfew throughout the occupied West Bank and Gaza Strip. He said such a curfew was imposed during the Gulf war, and during that time where no knifings.

Police Minister Roni Milo has proposed barring unmarried Palestinians from Israel, since most of the killings have been committed by Arabs without wives and children. Mr. Zeevi

dismissed the idea as "treating cancer with aspirin."

Mr. Eitan and Mr. Zeevi urged the cabinet to order the expulsion of known Palestinian leaders, and were backed by Housing Minister Ariel Sharon and Science Minister Yuval Neeman, Israel Radio said.

Operative decisions were delayed until Wednesday's meeting of Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir's smaller defence cabinet.

On Jan. 8, four Gaza Palestinians connected with the Muslim fundamentalist Hamas organisation were expelled to Lebanon following the stabbing of three Jews in a workshop outside Tel Aviv.

The U.N. Security Council voted unanimously on Dec. 20 to deplore the practice. The United States joined in the censure.

Visiting earlier this month, U.S. Secretary of State James Baker reportedly sought confidence-building gestures from Israel including an end to expulsions.

The army said the four facing expulsion were under arrest and gave these details about them:

Three of them were released from Israeli jails in a May 1985 prisoner exchange with Ahmad Jibril's Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine-General Command.

They are Jamal Abu Habel, 33, Muein Msalam, 31, and Hashem Ali Dahlan, 31. All are from the Gaza refugee camp of Jabalia.

The fourth, Jamal Abu Jadyan, 33, of the Gaza town of Beit Lahiya, recently completed a 10-year prison sentence for planting bombs in the Israeli port of Ashdod.

Arab sources identified Mr. Habel as a grocer, married with four sons. Mr. Dahlan, married with two children, worked for the U.N. Relief and Works Agency.

International organisations team up to alleviate suffering of war victims

By Saeda Kilani
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — "War is filthy, declares Michel Shroeder, press officer of the International Committee of the Red Cross. "There can be no humanitarian considerations in times of war, and it would be very difficult to render judgments on governments' violation of humanitarian rights."

Since the eruption of the Gulf crisis, more than 900,000 persons have been repatriated through Jordan, mostly by the International Organisation of Migration (IOM), but also by other humanitarian organisations, in addition to all Jordanians and other nationals who came back using their own means of transportation.

Humanitarian organisations have participated in helping Jordan following the government's appeal for international help. Their number at present exceeds 45, between local, international and non-governmental organisations.

However, in the first phase of the Gulf crisis, since August until November when the majority of evacuees flooded Jordan, most of the expenses of evacuation and accommodation were borne by Jordan. Only about \$15 million have been reimbursed out of the \$50 million the Jordanian government had to pay, according to a United Nations senior official.

"We are still trying to have the remaining expenses refunded," said Hans Einhaus, senior United Nations emergency manager. "However, it is a slow process."

the son returned.

Amnesty International recently reported torture and arrest of many nationals in several countries "with no apparent reason other than their nationality." These included Yemenis in Saudi Arabia and Palestinians in new arrivals.

"We are still on alert for a possible influx," said Alfred Kotek, IOM's (International Organisation for Migration) director in Jordan. "We will definitely stay for a couple of weeks to see how the situation develops."

ICRC's officials say that they do their best "to inform the governments concerned and endeavour to protect the interests of all victims of war, be they prisoners, detainees, or civilians."

Among the remaining evacuees are 361 Somalis who have been waiting in Jordan since August due to instability in their home country.

"We have received reports that the situation in northern Somalia is calm at present," said Janvier de Riedmatten, chief officer of the UNHCR (United Nations High Commission for Refugees).

"In fact, we have made sure, by a survey carried out on the Somalis left, that more than 200 desire to go back to their country. The others will join their families in other countries."

Senior United Nations officials confirm that, despite the fact that they cannot interfere in such a situation, they have taken initiatives and submitted reports to the secretary general on the actual ill-treatment and killings of Palestinians in Kuwait. However, "the Kuwaiti government is not in position to control the situation," ICRC Shroeder said. "I think that the United States along with France and England are the ones who can put an end to this torture."

Shroeder said: "The absence of any supra-government to assess the amount of violation of humanitarian rights make it difficult to force governments to implement international law. It would be difficult to know the extent of abuse inflicted on innocents. It is war and war is filthy."

Baathism

(Continued from page 1)

against U.S. and Western targets.

The military defeat seems to have also strengthened arguments by the traditional opponents of pan-Arab nationalism. These opponents, however, are not well organised and they are not expected to join any anti-regime coalition unless they feared that the alternative will be a conservative religious and sectarian regime, according to political observers.

There are no clear indications yet that views against Iraq's involvement in pan-Arab affairs have influenced the leadership's line. But, as one official says, it will be difficult for the leadership to rally support for a pan-Arab cause where Iraq would have to pay dearly.

Dr. Hammad's line seems to be different as he reportedly believes that Baghdad should not compromise its pan-Arab positions even if it could not be forceful in promoting it. "This stage warrants flexibility and we have to depend on diplomacy instead of violence," said one well-placed Baathist official.

Senior party officials are said to be very disappointed in the performance of many party members during the war.

Veteran Baathists, some of

whom have stayed away from the government apparatus as an expression of disillusionment, are now seen as important assets to be recruited to revitalise the party. Some are outside the country and others are sitting at home watching their ideals being torn apart, according to one of them.

But one such veteran Baathist said that he was ready to get involved in party activities again if that would contribute to saving Iraq and preventing "a puppet pro-U.S. regime" from taking over.

"We all have to contribute to the reconstruction of Iraq. But firstly opportunists and unqualified corrupt operators and officials should be removed or else there is no place for any decent people in the system," said the prominent writer, who spoke on condition of anonymity.

The writer has just returned from a several-week stay in Iraq to cover the war and its aftermath.

Jordan Times
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After long slump

Syria's economy improves

DAMASCUS (AP) — Visitors to Damascus these days no longer need to bring Syrian friends rolls of toilet paper as gifts because they were scarce.

The rolls are on sale at most stores — a mark of how Syria's economy, on the rocks until recently, is improving by the day and looks set to get healthier, although experts note that Syria still has problems to overcome.

Syrian economists and Western diplomats say the improvements are mostly the result of a decision to liberalise Syria's socialist economy, an increase in Syrian oil production, aid from Western and Gulf countries and more tolerance of smugglers.

A big hike in Western and Arab assistance, cut off for years because of Syria's radical policies, is expected because of Syrian President Hafez Assad's decision to support the anti-Iraq coalition which liberated Kuwait.

"The Syrians intend to exploit their new-found respectability to the hilt," analyst Charles Snow wrote in the respected Middle East Economic Survey.

Britain, which recently restored relations with Damascus after a 4-year break, has stopped blocking European Community aid to Syria and talks are expected to begin soon on loans worth some \$200 million.

Damascus restaurants now boast longer menus with food

items like "filet an Roquefort or chicken Marsala," dishes that were a rarity two years ago because cooks depended on ingredients smuggled from neighbouring Lebanon.

Some groceries have run out of shelves to store their local, imported and smuggled goods.

In most countries, none of this would cause anyone to blink. But in a country where only two years ago a box of salt was a luxury, such developments are.

"During my five years here I've never seen the stores so full," said a Westerner, who like other sources spoke on condition of anonymity.

The centralised control of the economy has hindered the Syrians' deep-rooted entrepreneurial skills and left the country with a deficit estimated at \$15 billion.

No official figures are available for Syria's foreign debts. But Damascus believed to owe the West an estimated \$1 billion and the Soviet Union around \$11 billion, most of it for arms purchases to achieve "strategic parity" with Israel.

"Our aim is to open more and more doors... to lift restrictions and give more economic freedom so that the individual would feel that he can practise all kinds of economic activity with the minimum of restrictions," said Mohammad Imady, the minister for economy and foreign trade.

They were to blame for economic hardships.

"If he is going to calculate, let him calculate properly," said Popov from the Kuzbass centre of Kemerovo.

"He should take the average miner's pay in the United States and then pay us the difference for the last 70 years. That would be the proper calculation," he emphasised.

Miners are among the best paid of Soviet industrial workers, but standards of living are extremely dangerous at most mines.

The strike has caught the Kremlin off-balance as it tries to juggle exploding ethnic tensions and separatism in the republics and economic collapse across the country. Several vague attempts at negotiations have ended in failure.

And it has highlighted the chasm between Gorbachev and Russian President Yeltsin, once his protege but now his greatest rival.

"They accuse me of supporting the strikers, but what (else) could I do? The strikers have political demands, the resignation of Gorbachev," Yeltsin told workers at the giant Kirov works in Leningrad Friday.

Hundreds of workers jammed into the hall responded by chanting "down with Gorbachev" and "resign, resign."

Last month, the Russian leader demanded Gorbachev's resignation and accused him of deceiving the people.

But the U.S.-educated minister admitted that it was not easy to introduce change in a country that has been the Soviet Union's protege for more than three decades.

A Western diplomat said that Imady would like to speed up the liberalisation process.

"But that's impossible for now. His approach is Western while most of his colleagues have graduated from Moscow," he said.

In addition, exporters can now keep 75 per cent of the profit they make in hard currency and can use the money to import specific items or exchange it at the tourist rate of 40 pounds to the dollar.

Imady said that in addition to improving the economy, the new measures helped Syria absorb the Gulf war-related losses in remittances from Gulf states and tourists.

There are four sets of exchange rates in Syria. The official rate at 11.2 to the dollar, the encouraging rate at 20, the tourist rate at 40 and the black market at 47.

One Western diplomat noted that the surplus being quoted was artificial.

"It's just on paper because the 1989-1990 balance of payments includes exports to the Soviet Union for which Syria did not get paid because it was paying off its debt to the Soviet Union," he said.

Imady said private sector exports jumped from 3.37 billion pounds in 1987 to 21.1 billion pounds last year in response to

one diplomat said the losses were offset by the rise in oil prices during the war and the infusion of aid for aligning against Iraq, its main Arab rival.

Syria has recently received an estimated \$3 to \$5 billion in aid from Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Japan and Western Europe.

There are no official published figures for Syria's oil production, but diplomats estimate it at

400,000 barrels a day.

Administrative expenses to meet.

He said the aim of the restrictions was to control the volume of cash in circulation to avoid inflation, to prevent a liquidity squeeze on the banks and to ensure Kuwaiti banks did not come under immediate pressure for foreign currency while they were finalising settlements with foreign banks.

The central bank set the new dinar at a middle rate of 0.28750 to the dollar and Sheikh Salem said the exchange rate would continue to be based on a basket of currencies reflecting Kuwait's main trading and financial partners.

He said the bank would try to hold the exchange rate steady for the first two months unless there was overwhelming market pressure.

"We will try our best for the first two months not to move our rate as before on a daily basis, unless the movement is quite sufficient (large)," he told Reuters in an interview.

The central bank would allow commercial banks to issue unlimited letters of credit for the commercial sector to import goods, he said.

Private cash withdrawals would be limited to 4,000 dinars per resident per month for the first three months, but the restrictions might be eased sooner, he said.

Transfers abroad by private individuals would also be limited to equivalent of 4,000 dinars per month at prevailing exchange rates.

Sheikh Salem said the limitations did not apply to cooperative societies and companies with

City an hour before they opened. The banks issued new dinars to replace banknotes in circulation before Iraq invaded Kuwait in August last year.

The change is intended to invalidate hundreds of millions of dollars of Kuwaiti dinars taken by the Iraqis during the seven-month occupation.

The crowd surged forward when the wooden doors of the main branch of the National Bank of Kuwait in the downtown financial district swung open at 10 a.m. (0700 GMT) but guards allowed only about 20 customers at a time to enter.

"Everyone is in a rush to finish his transaction. Otherwise there are no problems," Hanefi Hussein, the bank's executive manager, told Reuters.

Business appeared relatively orderly but slow. Many banks, largely undamaged in the occupation, did not have computer systems operating because there is no mains electricity and had to laboriously check written ledgers.

Hundreds of Kuwaitis queued to change old money for a new, post-invasion currency when banks opened Sunday for the first time since the Iraqis withdrew a month ago.

Men in traditional flowing robes and chequered headresses and a few women swathed in black began lining up outside banks in war-ravaged Kuwait

One old, bearded man angrily shouted and gesticulated when a

bank teller refused to give him any money. "There's no balance in his account and he wants to draw money," Hussein said.

The banks effectively ignored the Iraqi occupation, reinstating customers' Aug. 1 balances to give account holders who withdrew cash after the invasion an unexpected bonus.

Some clients thought the 4,000-dinar limit might be rather restrictive for Kuwait's wealthy sheikhs. But merchant Ali Al Qattan, 39, said it was enough for the time being. "There's nothing in Kuwait to buy now," he said.

Unlucky customers were left with bundles of worthless money. The central bank circulated the serial number of \$1.25 million dinars (\$1.25 billion) taken from the bank's vaults by the Iraqis and ordered them not to accept them.

Qattan said he had some of this money. Civil servants had been paid with it during the Iraqi occupation and some Kuwaitis received it in payment for goods which they sold, he said.

Some residents were anxious to withdraw money to leave Kuwait, devastated by the war and still without water, electricity and public services in most areas.

Bank officials said there were many requests to buy dollars but none were immediately available.

Asked if the bank would accept dollars in exchange for dinars, one branch manager said: "Who in his right mind would want to change dollars for dinars today?"

Kuwait issues new dinar at par with old currency

KUWAIT (R) — Kuwait began issuing its new dinar Sunday at par with its old currency, setting the same exchange rate as on the eve of the invasion, central bank governor Sheikh Salem Abdul Aziz Al Sabah said.

The central bank set the new dinar at a middle rate of 0.28750 to the dollar and Sheikh Salem said the exchange rate would continue to be based on a basket of currencies reflecting Kuwait's main trading and financial partners.

He said the aim of the restrictions was to control the volume of cash in circulation to avoid inflation, to prevent a liquidity squeeze on the banks and to ensure Kuwaiti banks did not come under immediate pressure for foreign currency while they were finalising settlements with foreign banks.

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Opposition reports 80 dead in Mali clashes

BAMAKO (R) — More than 80 people have died in clashes between pro-democracy demonstrators and security forces in Mali, according to opposition and hospital sources who said Sunday that people were being killed indiscriminately.

The clashes which began Friday are the bloodiest since a wave of pro-democracy fervour swept Africa last year. They pose the most serious challenge to the one-party government of President Moussa Traore.

The pro-democracy forces, a loose coalition of students, professionals and civic leaders, planned a rally Sunday morning in the capital Bamako.

Dembia Diallo, head of the Malian Human Rights League, said at least 80 people had been killed.

"That's the number we've counted so far but we'll never be able to find lots of the bodies," he said.

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In the morgue at the Gabriel Toure Hospital in the city centre, doctors permitted journalists to see the charred bodies of five people burned beyond recognition.

"The military locked these people in a shopping centre and then set it on fire," one doctor said.

He said most of the dead, including 36 bodies from Friday and 39 were shot while they were running away," he said.

Traore has said the congress will consider demands for multi-party democracy, but many Malians doubt he is sincerely open to change.

The clashes have caused widespread destruction in the dusty capital. Vandals have looted luxury stores and protesters have sacked some government offices.

Senegal suspended train services Sunday between Dakar and Mali because of the unrest. It said the service would not resume until calm was restored.

A woman who was shot in the foot while she was walking to see

S. African weekend township death toll reaches 17

JOHANNESBURG (R) — At least 17 people were killed in sporadic fighting at the weekend between rival black political factions in two Johannesburg townships, police said Sunday.

Residents of Alexandra, a shanty town of 200,000 people, reported hearing gunfire overnight around the township's migrant workers' hostel, scene in recent weeks of bitter factional warfare.

A police spokesman said 12 people had been killed in Alexandra since Friday night, three of them in a shootout and five more hacked and stabbed to death. He gave no details of the other deaths.

In Tembisa township northeast of Johannesburg, the bodies of two people who had been stabbed and hacked to death were found near a workers' hostel. Police had earlier reported three deaths from the area.

Security forces put up razor wire around the men-only hostel to try to separate rival factions.

The government has imposed a curfew on three Johannesburg townships to contain the warfare between Zulu migrant workers who support the Inkatha Freedom Party of chief Mangosuthu Buthelezi and township residents loyal to Nelson Mandela's African National Congress (ANC).

Alexandra's Mayor Prince Mokoena told the Johannesburg Sunday Times that the fighting in his area started when a township resident killed a Zulu after fighting over a woman.

"The Xhosa man killed the Zulu with the help of his friends ... when the Zulus heard that, the whole hostel came down and that's how it all began," said Mokoena, who is accused of being an Inkatha sympathiser.

Residents at Akkraipattu, a predominantly-Muslim farming village 240 kilometres from Colombo, said part of the market was ablaze after the bomb blasts.

"Most people had gone to the market after starting the daily fast for the holy month of Ramadan," one man said by telephone.

Shops closed and people stayed indoors after the incident. Tension was high and police and army officers patrolled the streets.

A spokesman for the main

Albania prepares for 1st free elections in 45 years

TIRANA (R) — Albanians face a bewildering political novelty this week as more than 1,000 candidates and six parties campaign in the first multi-party elections after 45 years of Communist rule.

The polls on March 31 will be a watershed in a year of sweeping change in the Balkan state as it emerges from decades of isolation imposed by late Stalinist leader Enver Hoxha.

The main contest looks set to be between the three-month-old Democratic Party and the (Communist) Party of Labour.

Few people are willing to forecast the result.

"Albania is quite unpredictable — there has been no history of free expression here, and this makes a tremendous difference between us and most of the other East European countries," one Albanian journalist commented.

"It seems there are many people who might vote for the Democrats, but they are not actually saying so."

The Democrats apparently enjoy support in towns but farmers in the countryside have gained by recent moves by Communist President Ramzi Alia to give them small parcels of land.

The Communist Party, which under Hoxha broke foreign relations, crushed religion and political dissent and even banned men from wearing beards, has introduced cautious reforms in the face of unprecedented protest and tried to revamp its image.

A meeting of some 200 Communist leaders Saturday called for "all-round renovation of the party so that it keeps pace with the times."

It also urged members to go out and canvass electoral support — a novelty for party supporters accustomed to more than four decades of one-party rule.

Although a party meeting in

December pledged continued loyalty to Marxist ideals, Albanian journalists say the Communists seem to have deliberately avoided mentioning Marxism in their pre-election statement.

The Democratic Party, founded in mid-December by leading intellectuals, claims a membership of 100,000 which it says is about 20,000 less than the Communists.

The Democrats clearly enjoy

large support in towns particularly Tirana, where hundreds of people mill in and out of the dilapidated villa which became their headquarters last month.

"The Party of Labour doesn't

have such a centre of activity," one student commented.

Moderate quake shakes northern California

WATSONVILLE, California (AP) — A moderate-sized earthquake struck late Saturday in the same area devastated by a much larger quake two years ago, but there were no reports of injuries or serious damage.

The quake, which struck about 7:12 p.m. local time (0312 GMT), measured 4.8 on the Richter Scale of ground motion and was centred three miles (1.8 kilometres) northeast of Watsonville, which is about 70 miles (112 kilometres) south of San Francisco, U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) officials reported.

Previous reports of a second, 1.2-magnitude tremor about an hour later were incorrect, said Allan Lindh, a seismologist with the USGS. He attributed the error to confusion over the time zone difference between California and Colorado, where the USGS survey office is located, and to different recording methods used to measure the size and location of earthquakes.

COLUMN

Identity mix-up costs baby's life

BANGKOK (R) — A case of mistaken identity at a Bangkok hospital led to the death of a two-month-old baby police said was murdered by a woman who thought it was hers. Somsri Charothon, 20, was given the wrong baby when she went to Bangkok's Children's Hospital early this month to collect her own daughter who was being treated there, police said Sunday. Somsri, a shoe factory worker, did not realise the hospital's mistake and later suffocated the child, suffocated her body into a bag and abandoned it in bushes near a suburban housing estate. Police said Somsri, who has been charged with deliberate homicide, told them she killed the baby on March 6 because she was too poor to raise her. The mix-up was discovered when the real parents of the murdered girl reported it to hospital authorities, who informed police Friday. The hospital has set up a committee to investigate allegations of negligence against two nurses.

Hillary named UNICEF envoy

UNITED NATIONS (AP) — Sir Edmund Hillary, one of the first two men to climb Mt. Everest, was named special representative for the children of the Himalayas by the United Nations Children's Fund UNICEF. The New Zealand-born explorer, 71, together with his Sherpa guide from Nepal, Tenzing Norgay, conquered Mt. Everest in 1953.

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have such a centre of activity," one student commented.

8 die in Sri Lankan market blast

COLOMBO (R) — Suspected Tamil guerrillas set off two bombs in a crowded marketplace in eastern Sri Lanka Sunday killing up to eight people and wounding 50, residents said.

The guerrillas, fighting for an independent homeland, also said they had captured a key army base in northwestern Sri Lanka after heavy fighting and that another was about to fall.

Residents at Akkraipattu, a predominantly-Muslim farming village 240 kilometres from Colombo, said part of the market was ablaze after the bomb blasts.

"Most people had gone to the market after starting the daily fast for the holy month of Ramadan," one man said by telephone.

Shops closed and people stayed indoors after the incident. Tension was high and police and army officers patrolled the streets.

A spokesman for the main

guerrilla group, the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (TTE), said from Paris an army camp at Kokupadayan had fallen to the rebels.

Tigers spokesman Lawrence Thilakar added: "The one at Sri Lanka is about to fall."

Military sources denied the charge.

Thilakar said the rebels wanted to capture the two camps because they protected Sinhalese settlers in the area and were also used as a staging post for attacks on the Tigers.

The group opposes the settlement of members of the majority Sinhalese community in Mannar and other northern areas which militant Tamils claim as their homeland.

Military sources said Mannar was of strategic importance to the Tigers because of its access to south India, the main source of weapons and supplies for the rebels.

Democrats express confidence in 1992 despite splits, Bush popularity

WASHINGTON (AP) — Democrats looked past internal strife and President George Bush's soaring postwar popularity Saturday to declare the party ready — even eager — for an uphill fight to retake the White House in 1992.

The optimistic message came despite the dearth of Democratic presidential contenders and was tempered by one of the party's more controversial figures, John Silber, who said Democrats lacked a comprehensive message and bungled its handling of its supporters.

"Shack dwellers have been forced out of their homes, which are occupied by people known to wear red headbands and perceived as members of Inkatha," the ANC said in a statement.

The ANC accused "people perceived as members of Inkatha" of whipping up the violence in Alexandra and appealed to Inkatha's national leadership to control its supporters.

The optimistic message came despite the dearth of Democratic presidential contenders and was tempered by one of the party's more controversial figures, John Silber, who said Democrats lacked a comprehensive message and bungled its handling of its supporters.

Still, the partisan and aggressive tone of the Democratic National Committee's (DNC) spring meeting made it clear party leaders consider the war far enough behind the country to take political aim at Bush, a Republican.

"We'll be tough, we'll be aggressive, we'll be even more defiant when necessary," Democratic Chairman Ronald H. Brown told party activists, promising a broad domestic agenda that would put Bush on the defensive.

The attackers arrived at the Westonia-Elsburg Mine compound in two minibuses and opened fire with AK-47 assault rifles on residents of the living quarters there.

The spokesman said there was no apparent reason for the attack but that police were investigating a political motive. No arrests had been made.

The poll showed that 70 per cent opposed one of the budget's main edicts — a boost in value added tax from 15 per cent to 17.5 per cent.

Polls also indicated public scepticism towards any notion Major was shifting his party to a more centrist position.

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